



The apple pickers

The English Countryside

I feel that she took solace from the countryside, and felt attached to it in a similar way to the nature poet John Clare. Nature does not let you down.

Early on Mary was interested in paintings but I don't think she saw herself as an artist, more of a country person who recorded things. I don't think other people saw her as an artist either, she was not part of the art world and didn't have friends who were. Mary had first trained as a marine biologist at Reading university, before receiving an education certificate in 1944, after which she taught maths, she only started painting after getting married in 1950, when she was 28.

Mary met Godfrey at Walberswick when she was on a field trip with a group of people observing the avocets that had just started breeding on the Suffolk coast, Godfrey's parents had retired there and he was working for the local farmer at Westwood Lodge after returning from Cirencester Agricultural College. After they were married they bought a smallholding at Needham with 100 acres of land, 50 being marsh land along the river Waveney that borders Norfolk and Suffolk. My sister Hannah and I were born along with lots of animals, growing was part of that life which required a lot of work. Mary's interest in the natural world took her on field trips. On one visit to Flatford Mill in Suffolk she met Dr. Ennion who encouraged her to observe and record the natural world. Her recordings became her life's work. They were not straight observations, as she brought herself into her paintings she developed ways of expressing her voice and a poetic understanding of the world around her.

When I stood at the top of that valley looking down at the farm after Mary died, I thought of the way their lifestyle had affected people, of course there are their children, and now great grandchildren, but it's Mary's paintings that are the most important. Out of all that life and industry it is her paintings and vision that have stood the test of time.

THE COMPANIONABLE COUNTRYSIDE

A dairy of a world without shadows

*I wanted to say these things and to record what I have seen to remind ourselves that
- in our haste - in this century - we may not give time to pause and look - and may
pass on our way unheeding*

January 1st



*All fields become striped from rolling, and subtle patterns are appearing as the tractors harrow
the newly planted fields. Birds have a shadow across the ground and cloud patterns flock the
earth.*

April 11th

If I ever assembled a book it would be in appreciation of the English Countryside.

December 14th

*My paintings are drawn from my surroundings
and from my private world, both of which are
completely familiar to me, vivid and real, in
which I feel at home.*

*I live with my family in quiet country, amognst
animals, farming activities, seasonal changes and
the ceronmies of the year.*

Please walk with me

January 29th



Wood Farm, Linstead Magna, Suffolk

*I should like to have been a stone mason
and kept racing pigeons at the bottom of the
garden in black and white striped huts.
Learning both skills diligently amongst rows
of well grown vegetables.*

*I can make bread and the hens will lay eggs.
What more could you want?*

Also a bell ringer at night.

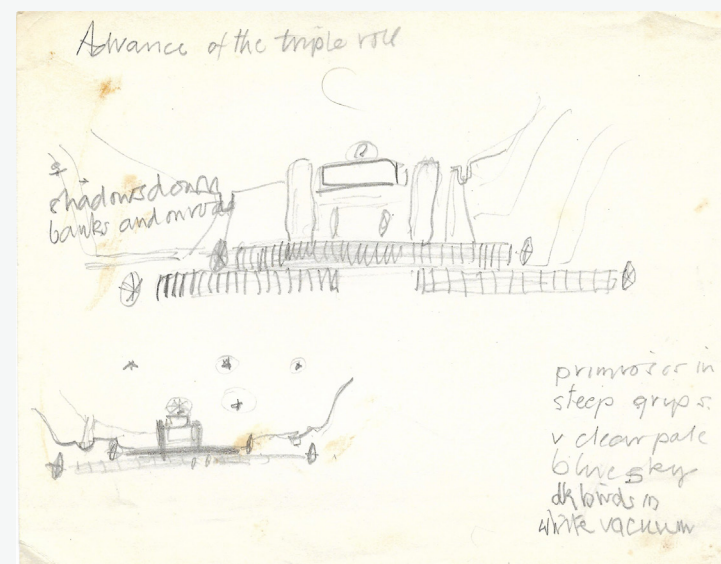
June 23rd



The country is companionable. Towns are not.
August 28th



Peaceful landscape, North Norfolk



There is a sound in April which alerts me - a rattling persistant sound which grows louder very slowly. It's the farmer pulling his triple roll along the road before he arrives at his field to start work.

The triple roll is large and heavy and is in three seperate parts. This sound alerts me because it is the sound of early spring - and quickly looking up, everywhere is blue and yellow.



Visitor to the mill. details

*I would very much like to go to Saxted Mill again
One fine summer day we sat on the wide common in the flowers, and
watched the shadow of the sails driving endlessly across the bushes below.
May 27th*



Waiting for the bus, details

*Don't worry, the shells will all wash back into the sea.
The dandelions will push up through the asphalt.
The man will whistle and none will hear him.
The grass will push through the paving stones and cover us all.
August 28th*

RIVER TRIPS

I am going down the river tomorrow.

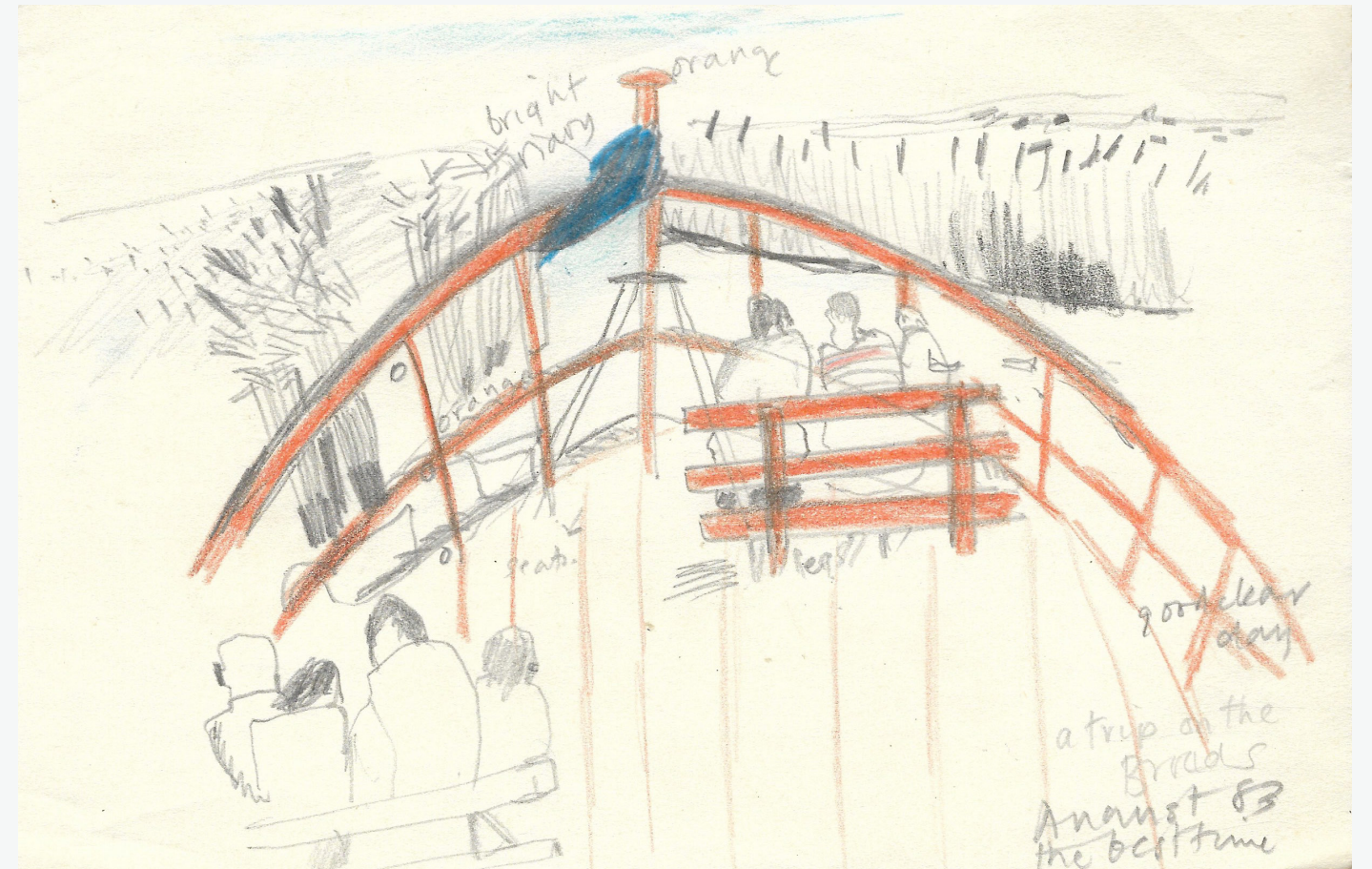
23rd July



Evening River Trip, 1985

Evening River Trip

This is a view from the deck of a small river steamer that used to go from Norwich down the river Yare in the evening. When it turned for home the evening quite settled on us and people knelt on the seats to watch the sun sinking – shadows of the trip flags on the left – all very still



A river is a fine place to sit.

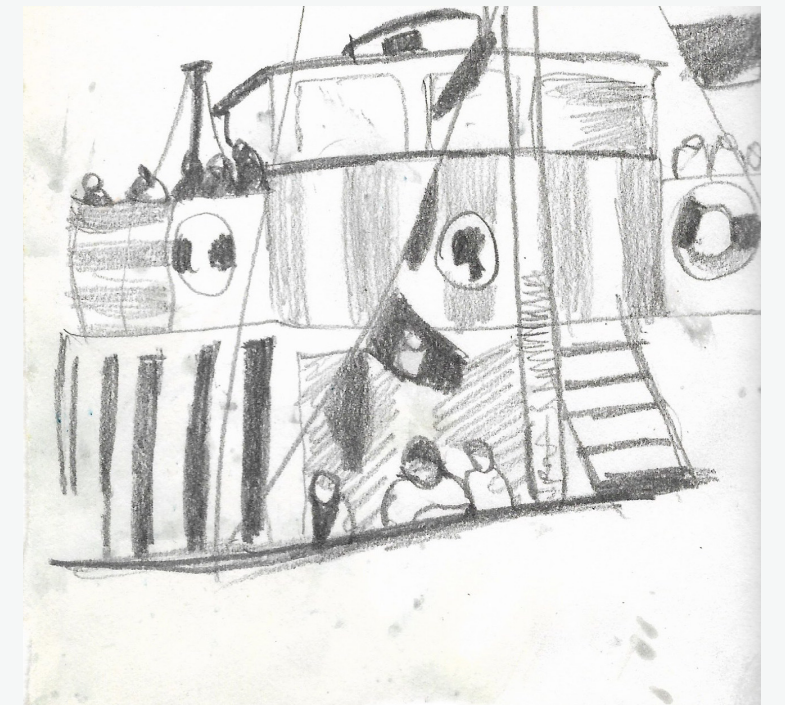
The river is going somewhere and you are not.

There is very slight activity all the time.

There is a sense of travelling - either you can go with it, conjure up the view round the next corner. Look back and recreate its passage in your mind.

*Better to be going somewhere all the time
- however slowly.*

September 28th

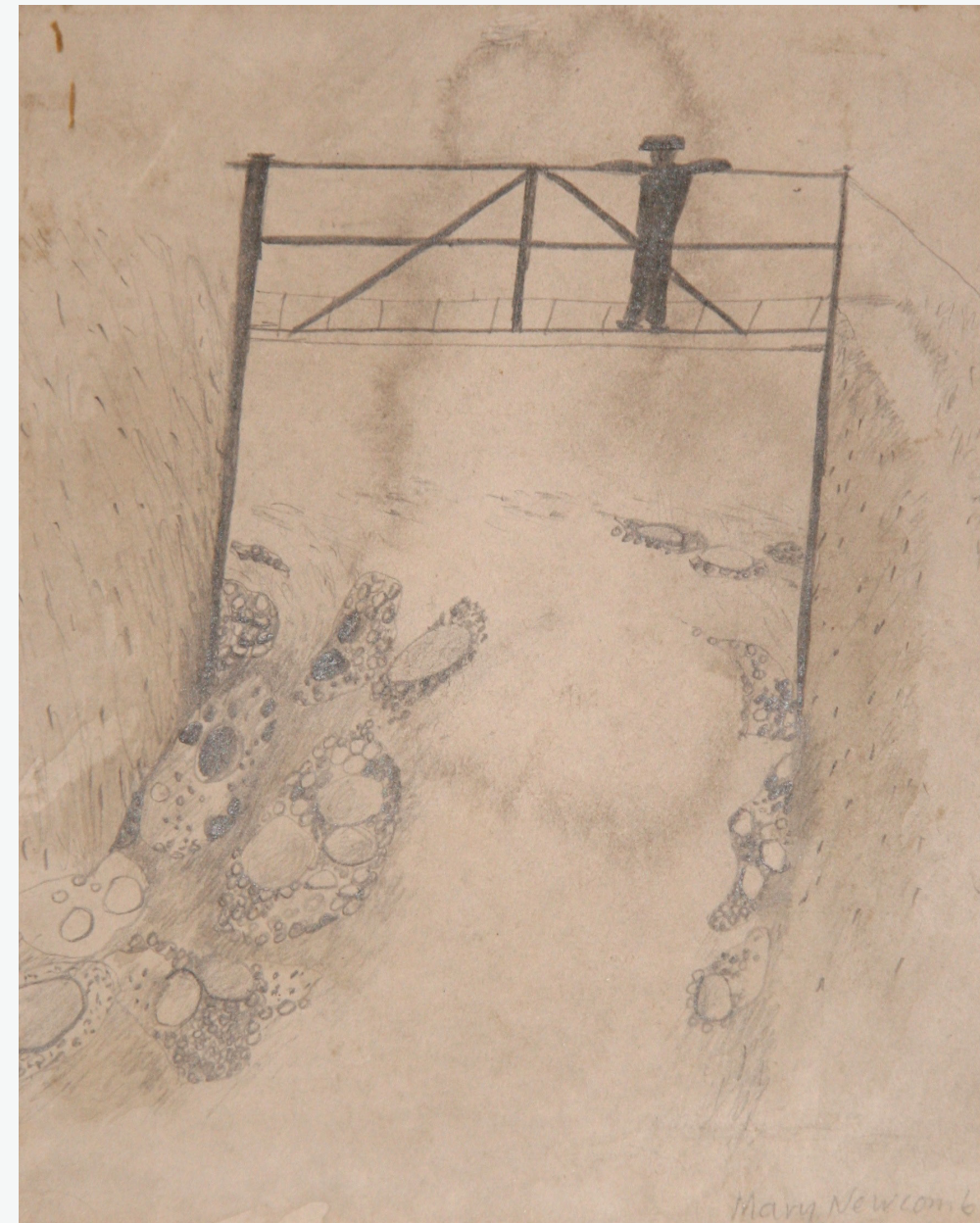


I have been drawing the reflections of a bank in the water. It was difficult to do and I only partially succeeded but by drawing I have looked, and by looking I have remembered.

September 9th



Fomaing Warer, oil



Saw rafts of bubbles on a swollen river, one day I will try again to paint.

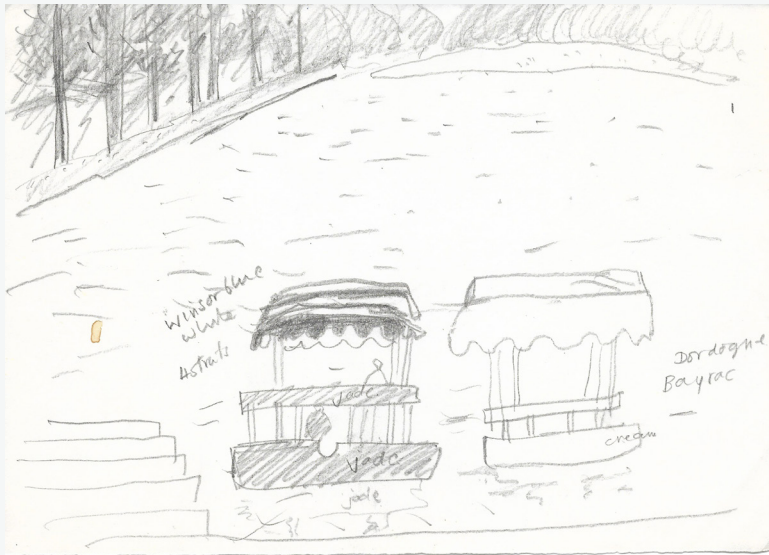
Mountain bubbles carrying views of mountains

Bubbles, inside them contain inverted view of the landscape.

Raindrops hanging on a twig, each contain a perfect view upside down of the immediate small patch of hedge in front of me, surrounded often by rainbow edges

Rainbows in the sky cannot be effectively shown in paint.

September 5th



Dordogne Bay Race
 amazing winsor blue & white
 lime green watery stems
 cream wet flowers
 rafts of bubbles
 crown of floating crowsfoot
 roots trailing underwater
 green grey metal
 humped cream dressed stone
 Tall poplars
 Trips on the river



Boat painting from Jayne - Needs to be photographed

We went late to the river, which was overhung with leafy trees. The sun was setting to the left and very very quickly the remaining light was draining away. Into this graded green gently rowed a boat containing two pink ladies. The rower was in plastic viridian and the boat was cream. Within a few seconds they had glided into the dark brown green shadows.

May 7th

DISTANT SPIRES

Tivetshall Long Mile - all grasses flowing in pink
ref. Lady with sweet williams Walpole



Lady with sweet williams, date?

It seems country people visit each other on bicycles still and take with pride a bunch of flowers, that they have grown, to their friends. Often in the country garden a row of flowers is grown for cutting e.g. sweet williams, gladioli, chrisanthemum, sweet pea (in abundance), a sea of bloom

What better than a bunch of flowers. Your friend will love them and will give you some in return. I wonder what they will be.

July 5



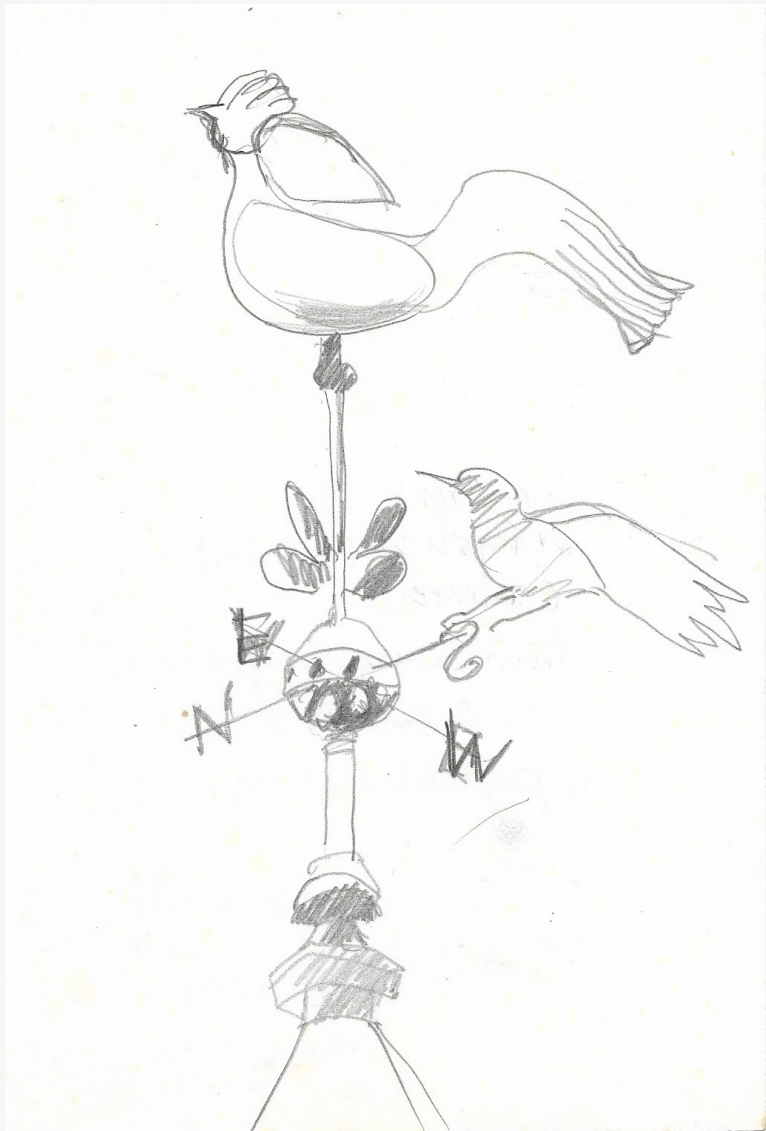
Lady with sweet williams, date?



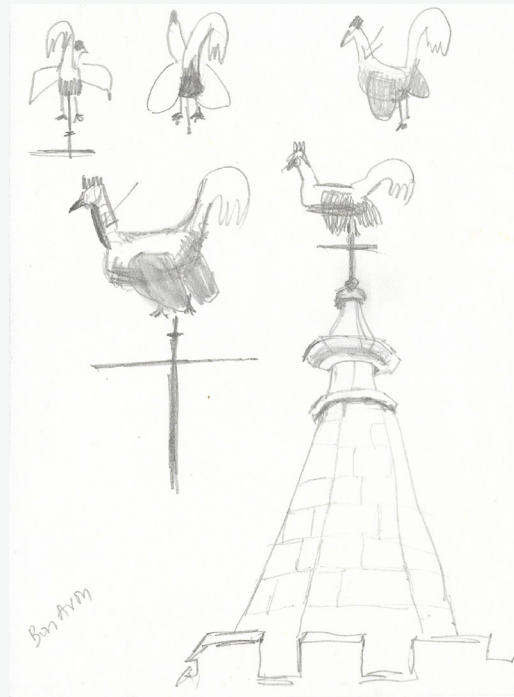
Fen Church

Distant spires - tall black steeples
sequence: seeing something you expect to happen

- behind flower banks
- suddenly seen on turning a corner
- behind people on sky line
- set in hollow in a landscape
- contrast to church if average church
- church towers



Black rook
 Very shiny golden cockerel
 Thin wings separate
 Black below
 Very pale blue sky
 Sainte-Marguerite de la Forêt, Gurnsey
 September 15th



Bon Avon

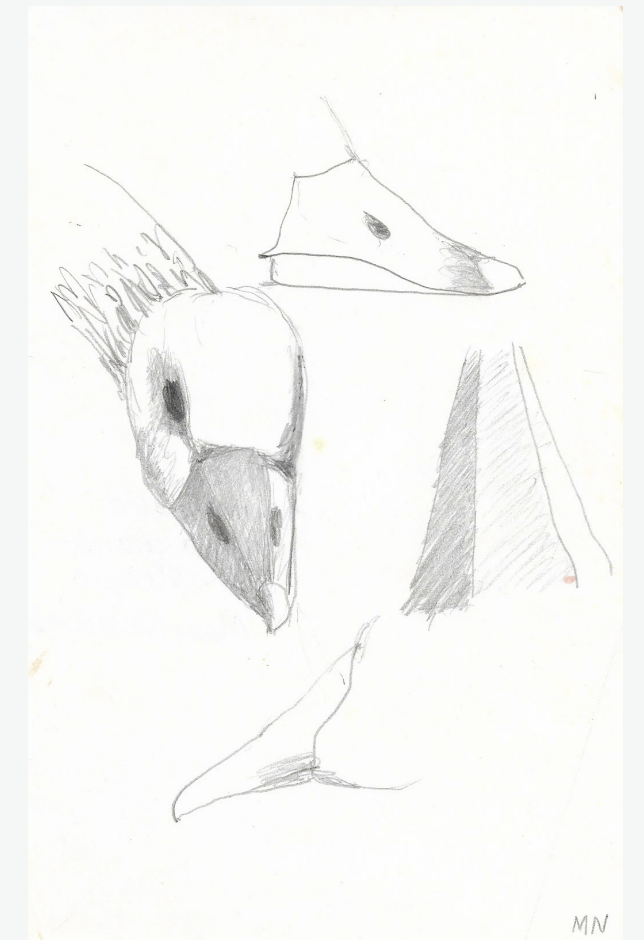
Early dark, 10pm
 Slightly illuminated
 Moving round in soft hot wind



Kalman addition: slide/photograph?

I wish the geese would go away. They
 press so close with button eyes. Their beaks
 are faceted - angular as a church steeple in
 Lincolnshire.

You thought they were white but look
 again.
 The are eating the roses and their feathers
 glow pink.
 September 15th



MN

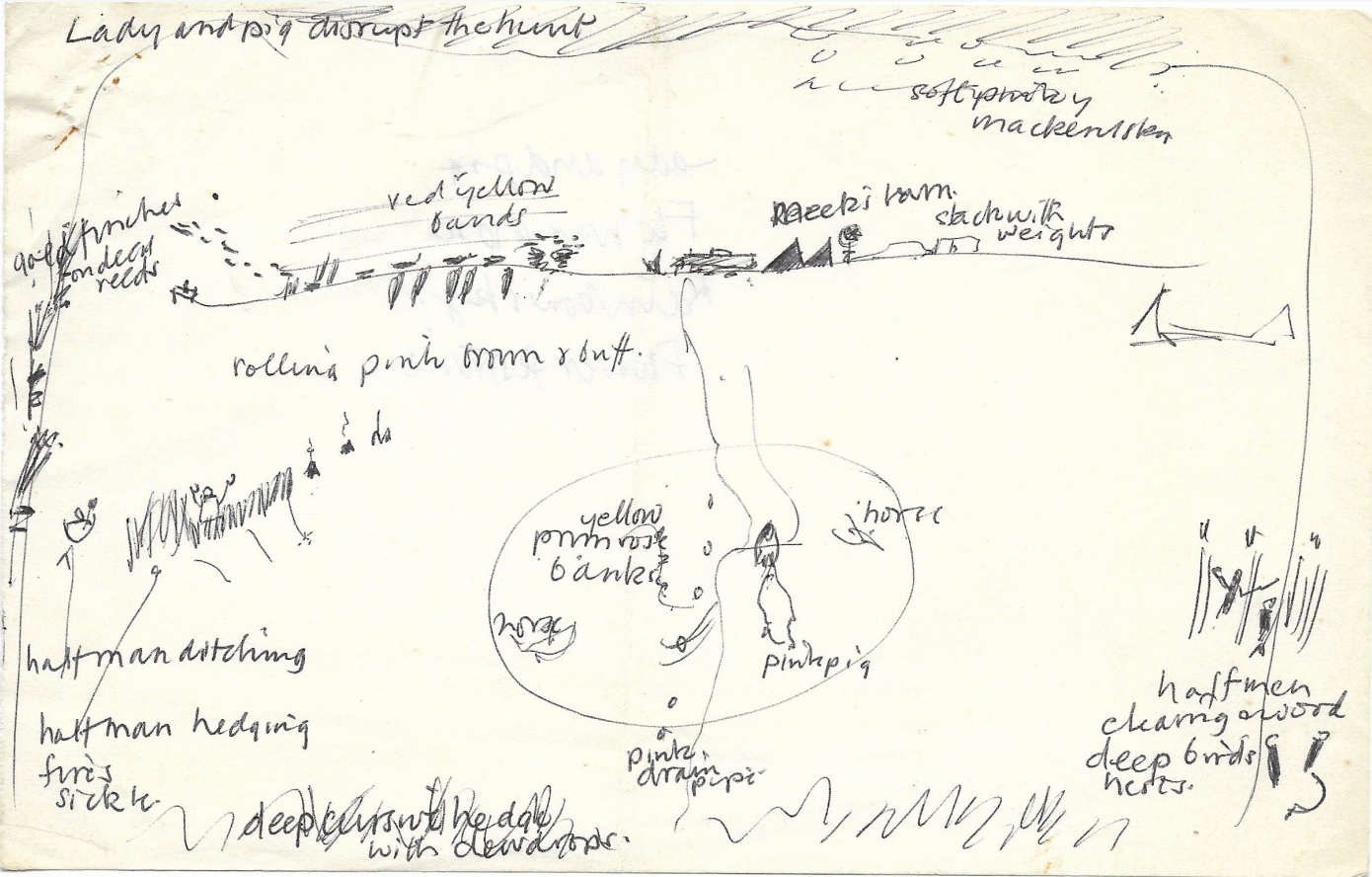
The greatest sound to me is of a bell tower
 rocking with a complex peal of loud bells
 unstoppable and overwhelming
 and the sight of the little humans pulling on
 the ropes below
 January 5th

ODD EVENTS

What an odd event, I'm sure it will never happen again
30th September



Woman and pig disrupt the hunt, date, rephotograph?



Lady and pig disrupt the hunt
half man ditching
half man hedging
half men clearing a wood



Momentarily a squared ginger and white horse stood awkwardly under a crab apple tree.

The shadows were mauve. The vision was my own.
May 7th